
**TCAP-Alternative Portfolio Assessment (PA):
Scoring Guide Cuts for Proficient and Advanced**

The Background:

The requirement for alternate assessment was first mandated through the reauthorization of IDEA 1997. All students, including those with significant cognitive and adaptive disabilities have been included in Tennessee's assessment program since 2000-2001. Students participating in alternate assessment were given two options for assessment: Portfolio Assessment and the ASA. ASA originally stood for Academic Skills Assessment. The acronym was then changed to reflect the title of Alternate Standards Assessment. In both cases, the ASA was an out-of-level Terra Nova assessment (grade levels K-2) or TCAP Achievement Test (grade level 3). Alternate assessment was initially focused on the functional skills on which students were working. Since the passage of IDEA 1997, the focus has turned more toward assessment of academic skills. The passage of No Child Left Behind and further clarification received through the USDOE guidance in August 2005 regarding the December 2003 Final Rules and Regulations for Assessing Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities.

In April 2005, the TCAP Alternate Standards Committee met for the first time to discuss the development of alternate performance indicators on which TCAP-Alt assessments would be based. Concurrently, the TCAP-Alt Advisory Committee met to discuss the need for changes to the focus of the TCAP-Alt Rubric to place more of an emphasis on student academic achievement, rather than programming opportunities available to the student. The need for changes to the rubric to meet the needs of students in nontraditional educational settings (e.g. homebound) was also discussed. The guidance from the USDOE received in August 2005 further prompted the completion of each of these items.

In compliance with the guidance from NCLB, the Alternate Performance Indicators (API's) were developed to link directly to content by grade level. The complexity and skill level associated with the APIs varies significantly from that of the general curriculum, however. API's were developed by a group of approximately 50 educators. These included the following:

- SDOE staff from the Divisions of Special Education and Teaching and Learning, and the Office of Assessment, Evaluation and Research;
- special education teachers and administrators from across the state;
- representatives from the TCAP-Alt Advisory Committee and from state special schools;
- LRE for LIFE staff; and
- Post-secondary education professionals.

The focus on portfolio assessment is critical because the August 2005 guidance clearly indicates that out-of-level assessments as they have been used within TCAP is not acceptable for inclusion in proficiency or participation rates for the purpose of AYP calculations.

In January 2006, the State Board approved the first reading of the TCAP-Alt: Alternate Performance Indicators and Revised Scoring Rubrics. The TCAP-Alt Scoring Guide cuts determine what score is needed for a student to score as proficient or advanced on the TCAP-Alt Portfolio Assessment.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of the TCAP-Alt Scoring Guide cuts for proficient and advanced as submitted. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

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Scoring Guide Cuts for Proficient and Advanced**

Regular Rubric

0-50 Below Proficient
51-80 Proficient
81-100 Advanced

Modified Rubric

0-30 Below Proficient
31-48 Proficient
49-60 Advanced

Homebound Rubric

0-21 Below Proficient
22-34 Proficient
35-42 Advanced